

THE
Carlsbad, New Mexico, Project
United States Reclamation Service

The Irrigation Way to the West

EDDY COUNTY lies in latitude 33 degrees north, in the southeast corner of New Mexico, being bounded on the south and east by Texas. Its area is 9,000 square miles. About 170,000 acres are patented, the assessed valuation of which is about \$335,000, and improvements about \$752,000. The population has increased since 1888 from less than 500 to over 10,000 people. The altitude in the valley along the Pecos river is about 3,300 feet. To the west, the Guadalupe mountains rise to 9,200 feet. To the east and north is a range of hills and low mountains, effectually shutting out the cold piercing winds of winter.

Irrigation began here, in a small way, in 1888, when a little ditch was taken out at grade a few miles above the present Avalon dam, and water was carried about nine miles to irrigate a portion of what is now known as La Huerta and the trees along the streets of the present town of Carlsbad. From this beginning gradually grew the present extensive system, which was put out of business by the destruction of the old Avalon dam in October, 1904, by the most disastrous flood ever known on the Pecos.

The stockholders of the Pecos Irrigation Company, then owner of the irrigation works, were reluctant to furnish the money necessary to rebuild the dam, and, with their consent an appeal was made by the settlers to the United States Reclamation Service to come to their rescue. The government responded promptly. Engineers came here in December, 1904, and made a most careful examination of the old works, the lands, the water supply, and the agricultural possibilities. These were found satisfactory, and the government acquired the irrigation works, which it at once proceeded to repair and reconstruct, making the best works, that money and modern engineering skill can devise.

Carlsbad Project has two reservoirs on the Pecos river, the first at McMillan, 12 miles north of Carlsbad, capacity 35,000 acre feet, another at Avalon six miles north of Carlsbad, capacity 5,500 acre feet, a total storage of 40,500 acre feet, of water enough to irrigate from storage alone 25,000 acres of land. The East Side canal is about three miles long. The southern canal and its extension below Black river, about 35 miles. The Southern canal crosses the Pecos river in a concrete flume 513 feet long. This was originally built at a cost of over \$50,000, and since has been further strengthened and extended. At Dark Canyon, a steel reinforced concrete pressure pipe, about six feet in diameter and 100 feet long, carries the canal below the bed of the stream, thus avoiding the floods that caused serious trouble to the canal in the past. The dam at Avalon, the distributing reservoir, is over 1,000 feet long and has been constructed with exceptional care. It has a concrete and steel core from rock bed to crest. Ample spillway has been provided to care for floods many times greater than have ever been known on the Pecos river. Water was ready for delivery April 1st, 1906, from the government works, and will be furnished for only 20,000 acres. Maintenance and distribution are in charge of government engineers, thus assuring permanency, stability and absolute equality of water rights have been approved by government engineers and lawyers. An incorporated association of water users, electing its own directors and officers, deals with the United States. Each resident owner of water right land has a share of stock in this association for each acre of water right, and each share is entitled to one vote at the meetings of said association. The shareholders of the association own all the water, but the title to the irrigation works remains permanently in the United States, thus assuring perpetual federal guardianship of each individual's rights as well as of the canal and dams, which will be paid for in ten equal annual installments of \$1 per acre, without interest.

Water Supply. And the water here, the Pecos river is a living stream that at its lowest known stage carries annually 15,000,000 acre feet of water. The water supply was fully investigated by government engineers and the title to the water carefully examined by government attorneys before a dollar was expended on a single foot of concrete dam. Therefore, with works of the character which the government has constructed here, and an ample and certain water supply, the farmer under the Carlsbad Project can plant and know what the harvest will be.

Lands Under Carlsbad Project. Over 11,000 acres of land were classified under the Carlsbad Project. Out of this the government selected 20,000 acres, the crown of it all. This selection was made with great care by the engineer in charge of the Reclamation Service, and it was based on data obtained by a series of examinations extending over a number of years. In the spring of 1906, the engineer of said land made the final examination, spending months in going over it in detail, cutting out something here, and another tract there until he had a list of the chosen lands under the canal. This classification of the lands by the government itself is of value to every owner of land under the project. Not all land that looks well as valuable for agriculture, and often is the home seeker deceived by appearances, while here he has the reports of government experts on the character of the soil of any tract which he may wish to buy.

Telephone service with long distance connection with El Paso, Roswell, Alamogordo, Texico, and other points north, south and west, runs throughout the farms. Free rural delivery runs ten miles south of Carlsbad. There are post offices at Florence and Malaga. No irrigated farm is distant more than three miles from a railway shipping point.

Soils. The soil is generally a sandy loam underlain with gravel or rock. It varies in depth from three to twenty feet. It is easily worked and responds well to cultivation. It retains moisture well, as a properly cultivated field of corn will continue to grow steadily for weeks without rain or irrigation. All soil comes from the grinding up and disintegration of rock. The Pecos Valley soil has its original strength. The rains have not leached it, but it is as the great mills of the ages left it.

Farm and Orchard Products. The variety of products that may be raised profitably under the Carlsbad Project is unusually large, and the tiller of the soil may choose what suits his taste and inclination. This point is important, as in most sections only one or two crops are staple and grown as a money crop. It is worthy of note that what grows best here is high priced, and therefore most profitable.

Fruits. This district is the peer of any in the United States in producing perfect fruit in great variety. Local conditions, climate, soil protection from severe frosts and by cold winds, moderate altitude, abundant sunshine, moisture at proper time, give fruit flavor, texture, color and keeping qualities that are unsurpassed. Deciduous fruit of every variety, as far as tried, grows to perfection. There is no danger of the over-production of fruit, especially of the quality produced under the Carlsbad Project.

Peach. Its delicious flavor and richness, color, its shipping qualities, places the Carlsbad peach at the top. Year after year in competition with peaches from the favored peach districts in the West, it has brought the highest price.

Apples. The Pecos Valley apple must be seen and tasted to be fully appreciated. It simply attains perfection in color, shape, texture and flavor.

Pear. It grows to a remarkable size, and at the same time is perfect in color, texture and flavor. To really appreciate the Bartlett pear the Pecos valley product must be seen and sampled.

Plums. Many varieties of plums have been tried. The quality is the best and the productiveness is remarkable.

Grapes. Many varieties have been tried and none have failed to produce abundantly and of the best quality. Soil and climate seem especially adapted to the culture of the European grape.

Other Fruits. The nectarine, cherry, apricot, quince, persimmon, etc., reach the same perfection as elsewhere in the territory.

Farm Products. Alfalfa, the peer of forage plants, is the leading hay crop. It is cut four or five times each year, and furnishes some pasture besides. One hundred acres of alfalfa means busy times, haying from May 1st till late in the fall, as one cutting is hardly out of the way till the next is ready for the mower. The yield will average over one ton to the cutting, while many fields produce over two tons. The market for hay is unlimited.

Kafir Corn and Sorghum. The first is grown for corn and fodder and it is a heavy yielder and gives better returns than Indian corn. Sorghum is grown for fodder, and is often planted as a catch crop. It is cured for hay, or fed green, hogs, cattle and horses relishing the juicy feed.

Cotton. Cotton produces remarkably well, one bale to a bale and a half to the acre being not uncommon. The staple is of a fine quality and usually grades above middling. There are gins at Carlsbad and Florence. Nowhere else in New Mexico is cotton commercially grown as yet. Owing to the sunshine and altitude the boll weevil is unknown and impossible.

Small Grains. Winter oats have become one of the leading field crops in the valley. After the oats are removed in the spring, some other field crop may be grown on the same land in the summer. Winter wheat, rye and barley may also be used to advantage in rotation with corn, cotton and alfalfa.

Root Crops. The sugar beet, mangel, carrot, turnip and other root crops seem especially adapted to this locality. The sugar contents of the beets is especially high.

Melons and Cantaloupes. The perfect sunshine, hamper, sweetness and flavor into the melon and cantaloupe. They are equal to the best that are produced anywhere in the United States. The uniformity, both of melons and cantaloupes, in size and quality, insure a ready sale at the top price even when the market is glutted with inferior stuff. Soil and climate seem to possess the essentials required for producing the delicate flavor and the juicy meat of the

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cantaloupes, and giving sweetness and crispness to the watermelon.

Dairying. The dairying interest is a source of certain and large returns. Alfalfa, kaffir corn, cotton seed, small grain and root crops make an ideal dairy ration that every farmer can produce for himself. The home market is large. Butter finds a ready sale at 10 to 15 cents a pound the year round. This mild climate requires no expensive building for the stock.

Poultry. Poultry may be raised with less labor and at lower cost than at any place in the territory. Eggs will average 25 cents, seldom selling below 20 cents. Spring chickens find ready sale at \$1.50 per dozen.

Bee-keeping. The alfalfa honey of Carlsbad has won a name. Bee-keeping is exceedingly profitable, and some who are devoting nearly all their time to bees make more money on the capital invested than in any other line of business.

Stock Industry. Stock raising is still one of the leading industries of Eddy county. The open range to the east and west of the Carlsbad Project carries thousands of cattle, sheep, goats, and horses. The irrigation farmer who wishes to feed for the market can find high grade steers and lambs on the range at a reasonable price. Pecos Valley fat lands have topped the market in Kansas City and Chicago year after year, and won first prize last year at the International Stock Show, in Chicago.

Gardening. Vegetable growing yields handsome returns. The Pecos Valley celery and asparagus are noted. Tomatoes, onions, cauliflower, cabbage and sweet potatoes are very profitable. By proper rotation, the gardener may have something ready for the market every month in the year. Flowers grow profusely, shade trees and ornamental shrubs grow rapidly, and in a short time the farmer can make the farmstead a thing of beauty.

Carlsbad, the county seat of Eddy county, is located on the Pecos Valley railway, which is now a part of the Santa Fe system, connecting with it and the Fort Worth & Denver and the Choctaw Route at Amarillo, the Belen Cut off at Clovis and the Texas & Pacific at Pecos City, Texas, thus affording railway connections north, east, south and west. The Pecos river skirts the town on the east. The population is 3,000 and is increasing rapidly. The town is a striking example of what water and enterprise can accomplish in the American desert. Broad streets lined with wide-spreading shade trees, fine residences, modern business blocks, substantial public buildings, commodious hotels, two national banks, schools, churches, water works, sewerage system, telephone exchange—local and long distance, electric light and power system, ice factory, hospitals, public library and free reading room, two newspapers, Commercial, Masonic and Odd Fellows' buildings etc., tell a wonderful story of progress. It is a growing town and has made substantial advance, even the last two years. It is headquarters for the United States Reclamation Service for New Mexico and West Texas. The agricultural, pastoral and industrial resources of the county are varied and their development will make Carlsbad a city. Carlsbad has cosmopolitan population, nearly every state and territory in the Union being represented.

In Conclusion. This article would not be complete without saying something for the healthfulness of Eddy county. The high, dry atmosphere is of special benefit to persons afflicted with consumption, asthma and bronchitis. Many people with these diseases have been permanently cured by residence here. Children live out of doors in sunshine throughout the year. Wet feet from mud or dew are practically impossible. Malaria is unknown.

Repeatedly since 1890 prominent officers of the United States engineers sent by the government to discover the best line for a railroad across the Continental Divide to the Pacific have reported emphatically in favor of the passes at the south end of the Guadalupe and Hueco mountains, where an elevation of only 5,000 feet is found with not to exceed a one per cent grade to get through them. These passes lie in an air line between Carlsbad and El Paso, and in connection with the new road assured by Mr. Spreckles, from San Diego to El Paso, offer the shortest line by 800 miles between Kansas City and the Pacific ocean. Citizens of El Paso and Carlsbad, working together, have recently undertaken to promote this line, with the result that a survey has already been ordered from Mangum, Okla., through to El Paso. What the building of this road and the completion of the government work will mean to holders of property in and adjacent to Carlsbad, need not be emphasized. Those who buy now will reap the fruits not only of their own investments, but of the labor and foresight of the pioneers whose patient persistence has laid the sure foundation for steadily increasing and permanent values.

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